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Item 3 (b) of the provisional agenda*

**Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development:
review of relevant United Nations plans and programmes
pertaining to the situation of social groups**

**Statement submitted by the American Association of Retired Persons, a
non-governmental organization in general consultative status with the
Economic and Social Council**

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996.

The AARP appreciates the opportunity to participate in the thirty-eighth session of the Commission for Social Development and to speak on behalf of older persons worldwide. The Association is a non-governmental organization in general consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, with a membership of 32 million persons.

Through our programme, Coalition 99, which functioned as an international clearinghouse for the International Year of Older Persons, we are uniquely aware of the many events, activities, programmes and proclamations that took place in celebration of the Year. We received information from all corners of the globe, from cities, villages, individuals and groups. We received so much information that it was impossible to publish it all.

Those events, activities and programmes are the celebratory, the awareness-raising outcome of the Year. From our Coalition 99 experience we would say that

the Year was a big success. Now comes the hard part, developing, planning and implementing strategies that will give us, all of us, rich and poor, young and old, men and women, in developed and developing countries alike, a real "Society for All Ages", the goal and theme of the Year.

In order to achieve that goal, the reality of that theme, the time has come to take stock of where we are and what tools we currently have to bring us towards that goal.

The Vienna Plan of Action currently serves as a guideline, a baseline, if you will. While there is still much in the Plan that remains valid, there is little that accurately reflects the realities of today's world, notably the accelerated ageing of populations, especially in the developing world.

We believe that the time has come when the Plan cannot simply be reviewed but must also be renewed, put into the context of the twenty-first century. Included in the new plan, if it is to continue to serve as a guideline, must be the results of lessons learned, the possible application of technologies newly available as potential solutions and, most importantly it must include the principle of human-centred development necessary for the creation of a "Society for All Ages".

* E/CN.5/2000/1.



We hope that the Commission will take the necessary steps to provide a forum for the renewal of the Plan of Action, one in which all interested actors can participate, as well as an infrastructure which will assure that an up to date Plan can truly serve as a valid guideline that can lead us to a real Society for All Ages.
